

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF PUERTO RICO

In re:

THE FINANCIAL OVERSIGHT AND
MANAGEMENT BOARD FOR PUERTO RICO,

as representative of

THE COMMONWEALTH OF PUERTO RICO et al.,

Debtors.¹

PROMESA
Title III

No. 17 BK 3283-LTS

(Jointly Administered)

ORDER DENYING MOTIONS OF MR. WILLIAM ROMAN MORALES CONCERNING PROOFS OF CLAIM

The Court has received two handwritten submissions which were originally filed in Spanish by Mr. William Roman Morales (the “Claimant”), a pro se claimant who was until recently incarcerated in Arecibo, Puerto Rico (Docket Entry Nos. 20236 and 20237 in Case No. 17-3283)² (the “Motions”), after this Court had disallowed his Proofs of Claim Nos. 178943, 179391, and 179392 (the “Disallowed Claims”) at the hearing held on February 16, 2022, because the Disallowed Claims were filed more than two years after the deadline, and because no facts have been provided to justify the delay.³ (Feb. 16, 2022, Hr’g Tr., Docket Entry No. 20164

¹ The Debtors in these Title III Cases, along with each Debtor’s respective Title III case number and the last four (4) digits of each Debtor’s federal tax identification number, as applicable, are the (i) Commonwealth of Puerto Rico (“Commonwealth”) (Bankruptcy Case No. 17-BK-3283-LTS) (Last Four Digits of Federal Tax ID: 3481); (ii) Puerto Rico Sales Tax Financing Corporation (“COFINA”) (Bankruptcy Case No. 17-BK-3284-LTS) (Last Four Digits of Federal Tax ID: 8474); (iii) Puerto Rico Highways and Transportation Authority (“HTA”) (Bankruptcy Case No. 17-BK-3567-LTS) (Last Four Digits of Federal Tax ID: 3808); (iv) Employees Retirement System of the Government of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico (“ERS”) (Bankruptcy Case No. 17-BK-3566-LTS) (Last Four Digits of Federal Tax ID: 9686); (v) Puerto Rico Electric Power Authority (“PREPA”) (Bankruptcy Case No. 17-BK-4780-LTS) (Last Four Digits of Federal Tax ID: 3747); and (vi) Puerto Rico Public Buildings Authority (“PBA”) (Bankruptcy Case No. 19-BK-5523-LTS) (Last Four Digits of Federal Tax ID: 3801) (Title III case numbers are listed as Bankruptcy Case numbers due to software limitations).

² All docket entry references are to entries in Case No. 17-3283, unless otherwise specified.

³ One of the Motions attaches a late-filed request to have the hearing on Mr. Roman Morales’s claims be moved to a later date because he wanted to attend, notwithstanding his incarcerated status. (Docket Entry No. 20324-1 at 8.) That request was not timely submitted, however, and the Court has already sustained the objection to his claims.

in Case No. 17-3283 at 100:5-10.) On March 14, 2022, the Financial Oversight and Management Board for Puerto Rico (the “Oversight Board”) filed certified translations of the Motions. (Docket Entry No. 20324.)⁴ Because this Court’s oral ruling concluded that the Disallowed Claims are not entitled to payment from the Commonwealth in the Title III proceedings, and because no proper grounds for reconsideration have been offered, the Motions are denied to the extent they are requests for reconsideration of the Court’s decision to disallow Claim Nos. 178943, 179391, and 179392. See Marie v. Allied Home Mortg. Corp., 402 F.3d 1, 7 n.2 (1st Cir. 2005); In re Pabon Rodriguez, 233 B.R. 212, 220 (Bankr. D.P.R. 1999), aff’d, 2000 WL 35916017 (B.A.P. 1st Cir. 2000), aff’d, 17 F. App’x 5 (1st Cir. 2001).

The Motions are also denied to the extent they specifically address legal and evidentiary issues in support of the claims in an underlying set of legal proceedings, because those proceedings are not before this Court. (See Docket Entry No. 20324-1 ¶¶ 2-4. See also Docket Entry No. 20324-2 ¶¶ 2-3, 5.) To the extent Claimant requests that (i) “the Honorable Court [] assign a lawyer to represent [him]” (Docket Entry No. 20324-1 ¶ 1, Docket Entry No. 20324-2 ¶ 4), and that (ii) “any documents that this Honorable Court sends to him be translated into Spanish so that he is able to respond as soon as possible,” (Docket Entry No. 20324-2 ¶ 2), those requests are denied because his claims are no longer pending before this Court. Claimant’s request for translations is further denied because, despite the Court’s limited use of interpreters for conducting certain hearings and the occasional issuance of translated notices for broad distribution, the Court does not, as a matter of course, assign interpreters or translators to individual parties. See 48 U.S.C. § 864. See also Local Bankruptcy Rule 9070-1(c)).

Accordingly, Claimant’s Motions are denied. This Order resolves Docket Entry Nos. 20236 and 20237 in Case No. 17-3283.

SO ORDERED.

Dated: April 18, 2022

/s/ Laura Taylor Swain
LAURA TAYLOR SWAIN
United States District Judge

⁴ On March 22, 2022, Mr. Roman Morales submitted yet another filing which, as the caption on CM/ECF indicates, duplicates the requests made in the Motions, and separately informs the Court that Mr. Roman Morales has been released from incarceration and requests that, accordingly, his mailing address be updated in the Court’s records. (Docket Entry No. 20431.) The change of address of Mr. Roman Morales has been noted by the Court and the Court’s records shall be updated accordingly.